

Communications & Advocacy Planning

TRUSTEE ACADEMY/SCHOOL
FOR NEW TRUSTEES 2025



Our Session Today

This session introduces school board communications and advocacy from the collective provincial perspective to the local community level.

Communication

“Communicating is a complex process. It is an interaction of three essential elements: the writer or speaker, the audience, and the subject matter.”

“The transfer of meanings between persons and groups. The purpose of communication may range from completing a task or mission to creating and maintaining satisfying human relationships.”

“People working together to achieve individual or collective goals.”

Advocacy

“The act of speaking on the behalf of or in support of another person, place, or thing.”

“The act or process of supporting a cause or proposal.”

“The act of pleading or arguing in favor of something, such as a cause, idea, or policy; active support.”

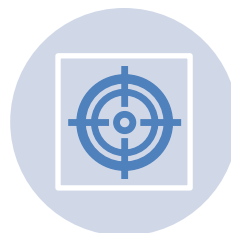
Planning

Communications	Advocacy
Research What is the communications need? What do we know?	Problem/Issue What is the problem or issue?
Analyze Situational and environmental (SWOT) Audience and stakeholders Goals and objectives	Impact/Importance What is the impact of the problem? Why is this problem important?
Communicate Key messages Implementation strategies – tools & tactics	Problem Solved? Benefits? What would it look like if we solved the problem?
Evaluation Budget – timeline – resources Impact measurement and outcomes	What's in it for the decision maker? For students?

Why?



What purpose do we have for communicating?



What are the specific goals and objectives for our communications effort?



Have we ensured those goals and objectives align with any broader vision and mission we are working toward?



How will we know success has been achieved?

Who?



Know your audience!



Who are the audiences that may be relevant to our communications effort?



Which ones are the most important for us to reach?



What are the characteristics of those audiences that are important for us to understand?

What?



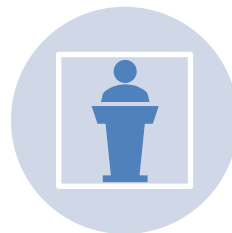
What are the key messages your communications effort needs to deliver?



Have you considered both explicit and implied messages?



What do your audiences need to understand for your messages to resonate with them?



Have you considered the types of persuasive appeals – logical, emotional, expert authority, etc.?

When?



What timing will be most effective to deliver our messages?



With what frequency should the messages be delivered?

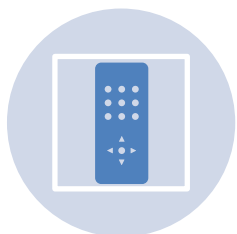


Have we ensured our timing is appropriate?



At what point will we evaluate the results?

Where?



What channels will we use to deliver our messages?



Have we considered place alongside time?



Have we considered various online and offline influences?



The medium is the message!

How?



What specific tools and tactics will we employ?



Who will be our key spokespersons?



What budget or resources do we need?



How will we measure the results?

Provincial Communication & Advocacy

The SSBA represents and supports the collective voice of locally elected school boards by providing leadership in advocacy, board development and high-quality services.

Our communications and advocacy efforts are handled largely via:

- Letters and emails for correspondence
- Member Updates
- Trustee Newsletter
- Media Releases – media interviews
- Social media – website – new member portal coming
- Meetings, events
- Councils
- Campaigns
- Collaboration with education partners, community organizations, etc. when goals align

Examples

Advocacy One-pagers
2023 – Present



Education Belongs to Community Campaign

2016



The SSBA's Education Belongs to Community campaign began in 2016.

SSBA Strategic Priorities
Ongoing



Examples

Local Government & Democracy Ongoing



Healthy Safe Communities = Healthy Safe Schools 2020 - 2022



Local Voices Local Choices 2021



In Living Sky School Division, high school students have the exciting opportunity to set their own learning path. The *Brilliance Project* allows students to earn a high school credit while exploring their passion and developing 21st century skills. From log cabin construction to medical research, students are guided by local and international mentors.



Education Funding Ongoing



Communications and Advocacy

Role of the Board

As locally elected trustees who make up Boards of Education – you are the governors that balance a responsibility to represent and serve those who elected you – while providing direction and support to the staff ensuring the delivery of education in your division.

As such your role is about being prepared to communicate and/or respond to questions, listen to concerns, take action, change policy, etc., at an appropriate governance level (as opposed to administrative level) with focus on the four main governance areas:

- Governance and Strategy
- Governance and Risk
- Governance and People
- Governance and Resources

Local Communication & Advocacy

Should reflect:

- ✓ Local priorities, issues, circumstances and needs for education.
- ✓ Local stories and news – celebrations/achievements/programs.
- ✓ That the governance role and operational role are different/respected.

Boards should focus on:

- **Influence:** the strategy/risk/people/resources by being the best advocates for local education needs.
- **Advocating:** to seek and secure the resources and support required for student success.
- **Engagement:** to engage effectively as a board representing the students and communities we serve.
- **Championing:** be the best champions for our school division.

Communications & Advocacy in Action – Telling Your Story

- Keep your communications and advocacy connected to your strategic priorities and plan
- Connect the most appropriate tools and tactics with audiences and organizational goals
- Be realistic – budget, timelines and human resources
- Think creatively but choose wisely – keep it simple and clear
- Focus on making connections
- Be timely, transparent, consistent and relevant
- Capture the heart – student centred – solutions focused

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ABOUT US

EXECUTIVE

ADVOCACY

SERVICES

BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Communications and Strategic Services

Media Requests:

communications@saskschoolboards.ca

SSBA Communications and Strategic Services provides for member boards a team of professionals uniquely experienced to provide advice and services. A range of services are made available to member boards,

- Strategic communications planning
- Communications tools and tactics advice and development: social media, key messages, news releases
- Media relations support and media training
- Writing and editing support
- Facilitation services
- Issues management support and advice
- Research and analysis
- Policy analysis and support

Website:

<https://saskschoolboards.ca/services/communications-services/>

Thank you!



www.saskschoolboards.ca